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United for Quality Care

March 3, 2022  
Lisa Emmer, CNA  
Harrington Court  
District 1199 New England  
Before the Aging Committee

**In Support of HB 5194 AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION OF TEMPORARY NURSING SERVICES AGENCIES.**

Good Afternoon Senator Billie-Miller, Representative Garibay, and Members of the Committee. My name is Lisa Emmer, I live in Colchester and I am a Certified Nurse's Aide (CNA) at Harrington Court.

I have not always been a CNA. I have a college degree and business experience, but due to layoffs, I pursued a new career at an older age. I had no interest in going back to school and I saw the need for this line of work. It was a real eye opener and I have the utmost respect for my co-workers who have been doing this type of work their entire lives. I have been working as a CNA at Harrington Court in Colchester for 14 years. I really enjoy my work and the relationships I build with my residents. I am 68 years old...let me repeat that...68 years old...old enough to have retired 5 years ago, but I cannot afford to retire.

This line of work is the backbone of the industry, as we provide the most essential and personal care of residents daily. The workload is extremely heavy. We have no staff and CNAs are doing double the work assignments with no compensation. We do not receive extra pay for working short staffed, and management of our Nursing Homes do not receive any punishment when they make us work short staffed. I may be older, but I show up. I continue to show up, not knowing who else will show up. There are so many nights that I am alone to care for 20 residents. Understaffing causes so many safety issues, not only for the residents, but for the staff who do show up as well. We are experiencing burnout and workplace injuries, like never before.

There are names on the schedule, but no one knows who they are. These names are names of CNAs & Nurses from pool agency staff that have signed up to come in, but do not, leaving us even more short staffed. If they are scheduled to work 7am-3pm, some do not walk in until 11am. If they are scheduled to work 3pm-11pm, they leave after 7pm. Using staffing agency staff also impacts continuity of care, because pool staff do not understand the needs of residents as permanent staff do. We know our residents and know how to care for them. We are a familiar face that our residents trust, which is critical in this care setting. The State needs to hold these

pool agencies accountable and come up with a plan. Right now there is little to no accountability for staffing agency staff, because there is no accountability for staffing agencies themselves.

Something needs to be done. We all have a common goal = to give our residents the best quality care, that the State provides these nursing home companies the funds to do so but are not held accountable when they do not. We cannot continue like this. No one is coming to work in nursing homes. These younger generations are not interested in working this hard for such low wages. Who will be there to take care of you?

Thank you for your time.